

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING HQT

Q – What is HQT?

A – On January 8, 2002, the federal government enacted the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA). One of the provisions of this law requires that all teachers of “core academic subjects” meet Highly Qualified Teacher requirements (i.e. “be HQT”) for their assignments. States must report annually to the federal government the percentage of core academic classes in the state that are taught by Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT). NCLBA defines “core academic subjects” as English, ESL, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, art, music, history, and geography. For a complete list of endorsements subject to HQT content knowledge requirements, see the document “HQT Review Areas by Endorsement Code” on the VT DOE Web site (education.vermont.gov under Educator Licensing).

HQT requirements pertain exclusively to licensure and content knowledge. They do not evaluate or reflect pedagogical skills/knowledge.

Q – What is the difference between being HQT for my endorsement(s) and HQT for my assignment(s)?

A – There are two components that must be met in order to be deemed HQT for an assignment.

The first is that you must be licensed (Level I, II, or provisional license, not an emergency license) and have the appropriate endorsement for your assignment. The content and instructional levels of your endorsement must **both** match the assignment. (For example, a holder of a secondary (7-12) math endorsement who teaches 6th, 7th, and 8th grade math classes would not be considered appropriately endorsed for the 6th grade portion of his/her assignment.)

The second component of being HQT for an assignment is that you must have the required content knowledge for the endorsement you are using in that assignment. By now, the Department should have issued you a determination letter regarding your HQT status for any “core academic” endorsements you may hold. These letters indicate whether or not you have met the HQT content knowledge requirements for the “core academic” endorsement(s) you hold. [Please see the chart “HQT Licensure and Content Knowledge Requirements for Classroom Teachers” on the VT DOE Web site (education.vermont.gov under Educator Licensing) for the specific content knowledge requirements that pertain to each endorsement.]

If both the licensure and content knowledge components of HQT are satisfied for your assignment, then you are HQT for that assignment. If either or both is not met, then you are not HQT for your assignment.

Q – How do I know if I am HQT for my core academic endorsement(s)?

A – When a core academic endorsement is issued by the Licensing Office, an HQT review is automatically conducted. You should receive an HQT determination letter within approximately 30 days of your endorsement being issued. When you receive your HQT determination letter, please provide your supervisor with a copy. If at any time you need another copy of your HQT determination letter, call (802) 828-1455 or email DOE-HQT@state.vt.us.

Q – Does HQT affect my licensure status?

A – No. HQT and state licensure are two separate processes. Even if you are not HQT, you will still maintain your educator license so long as you fulfill the state relicensure requirements.

Q – How long do I have to meet HQT requirements?

A – You should work in good faith to become HQT for any endorsements under which you are teaching. Principals should work in good faith to give their educators assignments that match their endorsements. However, HQT and employability are separate and distinct issues. It remains the case that if you are not HQT for your assignment, a Title I parental notification letter may be required. (See below.)

Q – What is the consequence of not being HQT for my assignment?

A – If your school receives Title I money (either schoolwide or targeted assistance), your principal will need to send, in a timely manner, a letter to the parents of your students indicating that their child is being taught by a teacher who is not HQT for his or her assignment. This is an annual notification requirement. Please note that if your assignment includes the teaching of a variety of courses, a letter need only be sent for that portion of your assignment for which you are not HQT.

Q – If I don't intend to teach under an endorsement, do I need to worry about my HQT status for that endorsement?

A – No. Your HQT status for an endorsement only matters if you are actually teaching that subject area. However, if you think you may return to the teaching of that area in the future, you should probably fulfill whatever outstanding requirements you may have.

Q – I teach physical education (or health education, library media, etc.). Why didn't I get an HQT letter?

A – The federal HQT requirements pertain only to educators of "core academic subjects," as defined by NCLBA. (Please see above.)

Q – I teach special education. Will I need to meet HQT requirements?

A – Yes, if you provide “primary instruction” in science, social studies, math, or English language arts/reading. Please see the “Definitions of Special Education Instructional Arrangements and Their Implications for HQT,” “HQT Licensure and Content Knowledge Requirements for Special Educators,” and “HQT Content Knowledge Requirements for Special Education Primary Instruction Assignments by Performance Level (PL)” documents on the VT DOE Web site for more information (education.vermont.gov under Educator Licensing).

Q – I teach in an alternative education program. Will I need to meet HQT requirements?

A – Yes, if you provide instruction in science, social studies, math, or English language arts. Please see the Alternative Program Teachers link and the “HQT Licensure and Content Knowledge Requirements for Alternative Program Teachers” chart on the VT DOE Web site for more information (education.vermont.gov under Educator Licensing).

Q – I teach in a Technical Center. Will I need to meet HQT requirements?

A – It depends. If you teach a technical education subject such as carpentry, even if (state-awarded or locally-determined) embedded credit is offered, you will not have to meet HQT requirements. However, if you teach one of the “core academic subjects” you will need to meet the HQT requirements for classroom teachers. Pre-Tech Exploratory programs are considered Alternative Education programs and, therefore, teachers in these programs will be required to meet the HQT requirements for teachers of Alternative Education Programs (see above).

Q – If I am "HQT, history only" or "biology only," what does that mean?

A – Vermont has generalist secondary social studies and science endorsements that enable the holder to teach all of the social studies or sciences. For this reason, the Department adopted generalist HQT requirements in these two areas. However, it is possible to meet the HQT content knowledge requirements for one or more sub-disciplines without meeting the HQT content knowledge requirements for the generalist science or social studies endorsement. For example, should you receive an "HQT – history only" HQT determination, you would be considered highly qualified for any social studies assignment in history. However, you would not be considered HQT for any assignment in geography, civics, economics, or general social studies. You may choose to do nothing further if you expect to continue to teach only history. Or you may pursue whatever outstanding requirements you have for the overall HQT in social studies and when these are completed, submit the documentation in order to receive a revised HQT determination.

Q – Do I need to update my status every year?

A – No. A determination that you meet the HQT content knowledge requirements for an endorsement remains in effect as long as the endorsement is current.

Q – If I take a course towards my HQT requirements, how can I have that counted?

A – Send in transcripts or other documentation of coursework, workshops, or other professional development that indicate that you have completed any outstanding requirements. Please also include a copy of the determination letter we sent to you. We will review the documentation and issue a new determination letter if your status changes. *Please note that we will accept unofficial copies of transcripts or grade reports for HQT purposes.* Documentation can be mailed to:

Vermont Department of Education
Office of Licensing and Professional Standards/HQT
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Q – Can I get a course pre-approved?

A – We are working with in-state providers (e.g., the universities, VMI, VI, the Regional Educational Service Agencies, etc.) to pre-approve for HQT purposes specific courses they will be providing. We will also preapprove a course if you email your request to us at DOE-HQT@state.vt.us. Please be sure to attach or include the course description. In general, as you search for courses to fulfill any outstanding requirements, think about whether the course is primarily content or pedagogy. For middle and secondary educators, this distinction is important for HQT. Also, be careful to ensure that the provider is reputable. If it is an online provider, make sure an appropriate regional accrediting body for higher education has accredited the institution offering the course and that you will be provided with a university transcript.

Q – Can I take an exam to fulfill the HQT requirements?

A – Most core academic endorsements do have a Praxis II exam option to fulfill the HQT content knowledge requirements for that endorsement. The following chart shows the available Praxis II exams that meet HQT content knowledge requirements in Vermont.

Meeting VT's passing score on the following exam(s):	Passing Score(s):	Will qualify you as HQT in the following area(s):
Praxis II in Elementary Education (test code 0014)	MC 148	Early Childhood (K-3) Elementary Education
Praxis II in English (test codes 0041 or 0042)	MC 172/ES 160	Secondary English
Praxis II in Math (test codes 0061 or 0063)	MC 141/ES 154	Secondary Math
Praxis II in General Science (test codes 0435 or 0433) and a Praxis II in Biology (test codes 0235 or 0233), Chemistry (test codes 0245 or 0242), Physics (test codes 0265 or 0262), or Earth Science (test code 0571)*	MC 157/ES 145 and Bio MC 151/ES 150 Chem MC 160/ES 150 Physics MC 140/ES 150 Earth Science MC 158	Secondary Science (all areas)
Praxis II in Social Studies (test codes 0081 or 0083)	MC 162/ES 165	Secondary Social Studies (all areas)
Praxis II in Middle School English Language Arts (test code 0049) or Praxis II in English (test codes 0041 or 0042)	MC 154 MC 172/ES 160	Middle Grades English
Praxis II in Middle School Mathematics (test code 0069) or Praxis II in Math (test codes 0061 or 0063)	MC161 MC 141/ES 154	Middle Grades Mathematics
Praxis II in Middle School Science (test code 0439) or Praxis II in General Science only (test codes 0435 or 0433)	MC157 MC 157/ES 145	Middle Grades Science (all areas)
Praxis II in Middle School Social Studies (test code 0089) or Praxis II in Social Studies (test codes 0081 or 0083)	MC165 MC 162/ES 165	Middle Grades Social Studies (all areas)
Praxis II in Art (test code 0131)	CR 148	Art
Praxis II in Music (test codes 0113 or 0111)	MC 153/CR 150	Music
Praxis II in French: Content Knowledge (test code 0173) and Praxis II in French: Productive Language Skills (test code 0171)	MC 157/CR 163	Modern and Classical Languages – French
Praxis II in German: Content Knowledge (test code 0181) and Praxis II in German: Productive Language Skills (test code 0182)	MC 148/CR 169	Modern and Classical Languages – German
Praxis II in Spanish: Content Knowledge (test code 0191) and Praxis II in Spanish: Productive Language Skills (test code 0192)	MC 163/CR 165	Modern and Classical Languages – Spanish
Praxis II in Latin (test code 0600)	MC 580	Modern and Classical Languages – Latin

*Note: The following Praxis II exams are no longer available, but they will count towards the Praxis II science sub-discipline requirement for HQT purposes:

Exam:	Passing Score:
Biology (test code 0231)	Bio MC 161
Chemistry (test code 0241)	Chem MC 150
Physics (test code 0261)	Physics MC 133

See education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/testing.html for more information about Praxis II testing in Vermont.

Q – What are the “highly qualified” requirements for paraprofessionals?

A – For this information, please go to the document “Highly Qualified Paraprofessional Requirements & Frequently Asked Questions” on the VT DOE Web site (education.vermont.gov under Educator Licensing).